



CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH
COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
INTER-DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATION

To: Jay Krietz, Community Services Commission Chair

From: Janeen Laudenback, Director of Community Services

Date: November 2, 2016

Subject: **Use of the Parkland located at the current Michael E Rodgers' Seniors Center/ Senior Outreach Center site**

Per City Council direction at the April 11, 2016 City Council meeting, the Community Services Department is working to follow the public process to develop a strategy and produce a plan for the re-use of the parkland formerly functioning as the Michael E. Rodgers Seniors' Center / Senior Outreach Center site. Also, at the request of City Council, staff has been working to develop an interim plan to continue to program the Michael E. Rodgers Seniors' Center and the Senior Outreach Center for community programs and veterans activities until such time that a permanent plan is in place for any potential reconfiguration and reuse of the site is determined.

In developing a plan for interim or PHASE I use, staff will work closely with the Huntington Beach Police Department and various community groups to develop a schedule for use of both the Rodgers Seniors' Center and the Senior Outreach Center buildings. Any City sponsored or co-sponsored programs will be staffed by the department responsible for scheduling and the staffing costs will be absorbed by that department.

To determine the appropriate long-term or PHASE II use for the two-acre parcel of parkland, City Council directed staff to conduct a charrette style format to obtain public input. Community Services staff will initiate the public process by preparing a general project narrative based upon Council direction thus far. Through this process, staff will present an initial concept and then seek input from both the public and Community Services Commission on the layout of the site, specific amenities within the park and programming. Public participation will be gathered through a workshop type format. This will address City Council's direction to provide the public with opportunity to speak beyond the three-minute public comment period.

During the PHASE I interim period, both buildings are to remain active community buildings. The Community Services Department will work closely with the City Manager and other City Departments to outline a list of potential uses for the building. Some suggested uses are as follows:

- **Continued Recreation programming:** Community Services Staff recommends that the buildings remain available to augment programmable space for the City

Gym and Pool programs including Youth Sports and activities. This and other similar uses create little or no impact to the community, and would allow additional space for programs, volunteers and participants to access and utilize a variety of program services.

- **Veterans meetings and activities:** Huntington Beach Post 133 of the American Legion currently has use of the existing Rodgers Seniors' Center building for various post board meetings and events. The designation of the large room as a Veterans Memorial Hall would provide a meeting place for veterans' events and activities, while allowing use by a variety of other community non-profit groups. In addition to the Veterans Memorial Hall, room "C" could be set-aside as a dedicated area for the post to conduct board meetings and would provide space to house post equipment.
- **Local non-profit group meetings and events:** Because of the number of regular classes and City programs at the community centers the Community Services Department is currently unable to meet the demand for meeting space for local non-profit groups. These groups include Boy and Girl Scout Troop meetings and special scouting events. Collaboration between these scout groups and with the Huntington Beach community would provide much needed meeting space for a variety of groups and activities at a reasonable cost.
- **Huntington Beach Retired Senior Volunteer Program:** RSVP is an active intergenerational program that can assist with the operation of the community buildings. Members can provide information to visitors, help with clerical and other duties, and act as roving ambassadors of good will towards the community's citizens. They facilitate child fingerprinting for ID purposes, and are active in programs to educate community members about safety and security.
- **Police Activity League (PAL) after-school programs:** The Police Department together with the Community Services Department can utilize the site to significantly increase youth outreach efforts. The Police Department has identified as a future goal, the establishment of a Police Activities League, commonly referred to as a PAL program. A PAL program is a specialized after school program that utilizes police officers and Community Services recreation staff to engage Huntington Beach kids in after school programming activities and leagues.

PHASE I CUSTODIAL MAINTENANCE COSTS:

Custodial Maintenance costs for the interim PHASE I use of the facility would need to be considered when developing the budget for the ongoing operation of the center. In the past, the City contracted with Merchants Building Maintenance, LLC, at a cost of \$15,000 annually to maintain the facility. These costs would be much lower with a more limited cleaning schedule and the assistance of RSVP volunteers. We are working with PD on possible funding.

FUTURE PARK NEEDS:

Any future PHASE II needs for Rodgers Park would be determined through the public process, working with Community Services Commission and City Council. The recent Park and Recreation Master Plan identifies approximately \$35M in needed park improvements, with \$27M identified as priority projects to be considered by the year 2020.

According to the Master Plan, the highest priority projects include facilities for active uses such as aquatics, cycling and various outdoor sports. Other high priority uses suggest the addition of lighted areas for softball and pickle ball, as well as outdoor picnic areas and indoor basketball courts. In addition to these active uses, passive use such as walking trails and picnic areas were recommended. All of these suggested uses will be considered when determining future PHASE II needs for the Park.